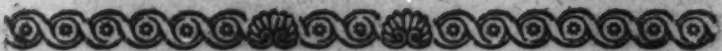


26



**FREE AND CANDID**

# REMARKS

On a late Celebrated

# ORATION.

Price ONE SHILLING.



In the Hurry of Printing, the following typographical Errors have escaped the Editor's Notice.

Page 9, line 10, *instead of* " plain natural inferences, *read* " plain, and natural inferences.

Page ditto, line 15, *instead of* " principles, with which, *read* " principles, of which.

Page 10, line 18, *instead of* " as I fear I have already trespass'd, *read* " as I am fearful of trespassing.

Page 11. line 12. *instead of* " the fullest as well as fair, *read* " the fullest as well as fairest.

FREE AND CANDID  
REMARKS

On a late Celebrated

ORATION;

With some few Occasional

THOUGHTS

On the late COMMOTIONS

IN

AMERICA.

In a Letter to ———.

~~~~~  
*Quousque tandem abutere nostra—Patientia.*  
CICERO.

~~~~~  
L O N D O N:

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1140

FREE AND CANDID  
REMARKS

On a late Colonel

ORATION

With



THE

On the late

46

109 9

AMERICA

In a letter to

George Washington

Gibson

LONDON

Printed by R. B. W. A. & Co. (Printers)

M.DCC.LXXV





FREE and CANDID  
REMARKS  
ON

A late celebrated Oration, &c. &c.

Of \_\_\_\_\_.



*My Good Lord,*

I Shall offer you no apology for  
the liberty I am now about to  
take, in trespassing on your  
Lordship's time and other avocations, by  
entreating your patient perusal of the fol-  
lowing thoughts upon our late American  
disturbances, which, tho' subsided for the  
present,

present, will, I am bold to declare, some time or other rekindle with redoubled fury.—Many and great have been the struggles betwixt my vanity, and prudence, on the subject of communicating them much sooner to my friends, as they were wrote so early as the beginning of January last—By the first I was prompted to write them, and by the latter I was deterr'd from publishing them, upon a report then propagated abroad, which check'd my ardor and resolution on that head. The report was in effect, that Mr. P. had publicly declared his disapprobation totally of that measure of government as unconstitutional, and that he was determined, at the meeting of parliament, fully to prove and expose the same. This declaration, from such a quarter, did not fail to intimidate me from any farther progress in, or thought upon the subject: As I doubted not but my sentiments would be, by that honorable Gentleman, fully exploded; and a very satisfactory definition given, of the origin,

origin, and foundation of our government thoroughly investigated, with the fatal consequences naturally resulting from this same measure. I indeed expected a very learned, and convictive disquisition of the design, utility, and end of all civil institutions, argued upon *relative*, and not *general* principles of liberty, from whence fair consequences, and conclusions might be deduced, apposite to our own happy system of government. I looked for a clear exposition of such authorities in our political establishment, and œconomy, collated with our ancient records, and fundamental statutes, by which the right of taxing our colonies was thence clearly proved unconstitutional. In short I conceived a doctrine established upon principles adapted to civil society, and not consonant to the natural rights of mankind uncivilized, and unrestrained by the laws, and power of magistracy.

Upon this plausible, tho' imaginary presumption, I impatiently waited the  
issue

issue of that great man's examination of this momentous subject, which I thought likely to expose the fallacy, and futility of my own opinions; and which I had determined, on the first conviction thereof, to have committed to the flames. This Consideration deterr'd me from communicating to my friends these few remarks, untill I had seen Mr. P.'s sentiments on the subject. At length, my good Lord, my curiosity has been gratified, tho' my expectations have been most amazingly disappointed. *Parturiunt Montes.* Your Lordship may guess my surprise, when on perusal of this extraordinary speech, in lieu of these sound, argumentative truths, I found only speculative opinions, founded upon general principles, incompatible with the very existence of government, and well being of society: mere sophistical arguments, incapable of being ever reduced into practice, delivered with a degree of presumption unrecorded in history.



In this oration, I am bold to assert, Mr. P. has erected his own *Fiat* as the standard of *Infallibility*, to which, all persons who do not implicitly subscribe their faith, are by him treated with the most avowed contempt. And of this oration, I will also venture to say, a very small part has any tendency to, or relation with the grand subject in debate. His digressions, which are many, and abounding with Pleonasm, are expressive only of his commendations on himself and abuse of others, and no way applicable to the point in agitation. Of this I will beg leave to produce to your Lordship one or two instances. What sympathy, in the name of wonder, subsisted between *his* German war (as he calls it) and the present confusion in America? Or what had his seeking merit where ever it was to be found, with a long detail of his own exploits in administration, to do with the right of taxing the colonies? Surely Mr. P. must have entertained rather an unfavourable opinion of the H. of C. to  
have

have attempted passing upon them such idle fustian. I come next to the abusive part of his speech, and sorry I am first to observe the little respect he has there paid to the members of our established religion——“ the Church, (*God bless it*) has but a poor pittance,” is a language admissible only in the most private companies; but in a publick assembly of the nation; in full and solemn debate, it is so flagrant a breach of decency and decorum, as can admit of no extenuation. Vain is the attempt of magistracy to curb, or restrain the licentiousness so predominant amongst the inferior rank of men in this country, when gentlemen publickly deliver their ridicule of the members of that religion, which has been ever considered, by the wisdom of our forefathers, as the most actuating influence on the morals of the inferior class of mankind. The peers of the realm he has likewise introduced with an apparent slight, unmerited, and unjust——for tho’ their revenues may be found unequal  
to

to the greater body of commons in this kingdom, they are notwithstanding very far from being so contemptible, as to deserve so disproportionate, and disrespectful a comparison.—I do not mean, my Lord, to insinuate any harsh or injurious interpretations of Mr. P.'s words, which perhaps were never included in his meaning—I have only pointed out the most plain natural inferences deducible from his own arguments, which ought to have been delivered with more caution, and less appearance of intentional offence, more especially as they favour much of republican principles, with which that gentleman has been too frequently accused.—Your Lordship will do me the justice to acknowledge that I have often stood forth the profess'd tho' feeble advocate to Mr. P. whenever I have thought his Conduct has been arraign'd by incompetent or partial judges, upon groundless or frivolous accusations; but upon this occasion I cannot pay compliments to popular delusion at the expence of my

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understanding, by subscribing my faith to their extravagant approbation of this speech. If a collective body has not escaped the lash of his censorial inquisition, it is not to be wondered at, that individuals have likewise undergone the same fate. In one single breath he has presumed to condemn in a lump, without any examination of particulars, every measure, as erroneous, adopted, and carried into execution by Mr. G——'s administration, ——— this is authority with a witness ; it is in short, my Lord, nothing more nor less than Lord Peter's loaf, which is very good mutton, or any thing else he pleases, which if you don't believe may the Lord d—mn you.

I shall now conclude this subject, as I fear I have already trespassed too much on your Lordship's kind indulgence, with some few remarks on that gentleman's refin'd sophistry, or subtilty in evading the question. Mr. G——e, in the support and illustration of his argument,  
did



did think proper to introduce some authorities from our statutes, &c. at which Mr. P. has taken great offence because he was not prepared to answer them, and therefore treats them with the most virulent contempt; "I came not here  
 " armed at all points with law cases, and  
 " acts of parliament, &c. &c." I ask why he did not come better prepared? had he not timely notice of the matter to be debated? or was it not a subject which required the fullest as well as fair-discussion? Were not the authorities of our constitution the best means of investigating the subject? or was his sole *ipse dixit* to be the definitive sentence, from whence lay no appeal? In his long preamble about ministers, deduced from many years backwards, all which tend nothing to the purpose, he concludes with observing that none of them ever thought of taxing America. And what then? Does it follow that the measure must be wrong, because never adopted by preceding ministers? this is surely

begging the question. But that no such conclusion will follow I will venture to affirm : on the contrary, it is much more natural to suppose that former ministers forbore to lay any taxes on the colonies from a knowledge of their poverty, and inability to raise them : and not from any doubt of their right, which it is presumable never once engaged their thoughts : and this supposition is grounded on the acknowledged incapacity of the Americans to contribute to the support of government 'till since this war, whereby they have been such principal gainers.

A little preceding this curious historical and critical account of ministers, he says, " the gentleman, (meaning Mr. G——) " tells us of many that have been " taxed, and yet not represented ; the India company, Merchants, Stock-holders, Manufacturers, surely many of " these are represented in other capacities, as owners of lands or freemen " of boroughs. But they are all *Inhabitants*,

“ *tants*, and as such are virtually repre-  
 “ sented.” And why? because truly,  
 “ they have connections with those that  
 “ do elect, and they have influence over  
 “ them.” Happy conclusion indeed!  
 but will not this argument be found e-  
 qually valid, with respect to the Ameri-  
 cans? whose connections with, and in-  
 fluence in the city of London, and every  
*trading*, and *manufacturing* city or town  
 in this kingdom must, from the very na-  
 ture of their commerce, be ever power-  
 ful. And are they not as *subjects* under  
 one, and the same government, and  
*bound* by the same laws, as *virtually* re-  
 presented, as if they were *Inhabitants* of  
 the same country? Can mere local di-  
 stinctions cause any alteration in a system  
 of government, plan’d for the general  
 good of the mother country, without  
 reference to particular cases, which could  
 not by the wisdom of our ancestors have  
 been foreseen, nor of course provided  
 for? Surely if *virtual representation* has  
 any meaning whatever, it must be equally  
 binding

binding in both cases. I would not be here, thought, my good Lord, to enter into the merits of the subject—I mean only to expose the futility of such sophistical refinements, which tend more to the exercise of the tongue, than an enquiry into the truth, and serve only to mislead the judgment of those who from incapacity, or inattention, do not give themselves the trouble of examining their contents.

That this seems rather to be the tendency of that celebrated oration, I submit to the consideration of all impartial judges: the arguments of which are too general, and sophistical, the inferences are inconclusive, and unsupported by any other than the honourable gentleman's own authority—the refined distinctions therein made, between taxation and legislation are, at least *impolitic* if not chimerical, as taxation must be allowed the very essence, and spirit of legislation, and the principium of all parliamentary authority,



thority, without which the sovereignty of this country must be ever held precarious. Nor do I think such distinctions deducible from, or authorized by the true *spirit* of our constitution.—I say, *spirit* of our constitution, because constitution alone is a word seldom or ever argued upon with justice, as it is seldom or ever impartially or fundamentally considered. Votaries for arbitrary, or republican principles, are never at a loss for authorities, collectible from the many accidental revolutions in our government, to give a colour to their opinions. Arguments and examples, however extravagant on both sides the question, are frequently introduced to enforce new fangled doctrines too often suggested by whim, or caprice.

I have thus far endeavoured to explain my free, and candid opinion of that great man's arguments upon this occasion, which have met with so general an approbation.—It may, perhaps, be thought presumption in me, to examine a point of  
such

such weight in competition with a gentleman of such eminent abilities as Mr. P. but as I have the happiness to live in a free country, where the liberty to scrutinize every measure of publick concern is the acknowledged birth-right of every Briton, I flatter myself that these dispassionate remarks will not be thought so impertinent.—Happy I shall be if they be found to merit your Lordship's approbation, and sorry, tho' not displeased, if not productive of such effect.

Having now fully explain'd my sentiments with regard to Mr. P.'s discussion of this subject, I shall now beg leave to deliver my free and candid Remarks upon an event which has for some time past engross'd publick speculation; and first I shall examine that system of politicks, respecting those colonies which has apparently prevail'd amongst us for some years past; from whence may be traced those unhappy consequences which have given birth to these unexpected  
com-

commotions. It is at present my lord an enquiry of the utmost importance, and as such challenges our particular regard: for remedies can never be judiciously, or safely administered, unless the cause of the distemper be thoroughly understood; and the present disease, unless a speedy remedy be applied, will prove desperate, and in the end fatal to this country.

I shall enter into no discussion of that measure, as to its *expediency* and *propriety*, which has unfortunately caused this precipitate rebellion. I shall only consider this subject in a *political* light *respecting this country*, and, in as much, regard our American colonies as deriving their *existence* from this country, and *consequently* bound to obey, as well as contribute to the support of its government. An attention to their charters I conceive also to be no longer obligatory when found repugnant to the interests and welfare of this kingdom.

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I would

I would not however have it absurdly infer'd from hence, that I think no regard is to be paid to such privileges.— They are in my opinion, the basis on which private security is established; and should not be wantonly, or arbitrarily infringed upon. But on the other hand, it is equally absurd to imagine that charters inconsiderately granted by any prince, or thro' the instigation of a corrupt administration, to serve perhaps only temporary purposes, can be esteemed binding upon posterity, when found incompatible with the interest of the mother country. To admit the validity of this opinion, it is necessary to allow a knowledge of futurity, or exemption from error, as invariably bestow'd by providence, upon all princes, and statesmen; as times and circumstances may either essentially alter the purposes, for which such immunities were conceded, or be productive of unforeseen ill consequences. Such will be found, by all considerate, and impartial men, to be those



those \* charters, upon which the Americans ground the cause of their present disobedience to a law, enacted by a British parliament, for the support of that government which has expended millions to protect them in all times of their distress.

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By

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\* I cannot find, upon a perusal of those several charters, any clause whatever, which exempts the subjects in America from the jurisdiction of the British parliament; but, as the power of taxing our colonies has been disputed, upon principles of Magna Charta "as their not being represented in that parliament," I have investigated that great authority, and can find no such meaning whatever: all that Magna Charter delivers, which has any relation to that purport, is, "that the King engages not to raise any money on his subjects, "but with the concurrence of the states of the "realm." The states of the realm may be *virtually* considered the representatives of the whole British nation, both at home and abroad; but cannot surely *individually*—as is evidently known in the case of the Roman Catholics, who, tho' subjects to the crown of Great Britain, are expressly forbid the right of voting for representatives in parliament, and are notwithstanding *taxed* with the rest of the nation,

By too favorable an attention to the prosperity and increase of those colonies, government upon a fair retrospection of her own conduct, will appear necessary towards this premature attempt of the Americans to shake off the jurisdiction of this country; a conduct founded upon principles favourable to our trade, and manufactories, which, as being productive of most popularity, have principally engaged the attention of administration. For it is become an established maxim of late years, to which the sentiments of most orders, and degrees of men have been but too generally subscribed; "That the greatness of a state depends on the extent, and security of its commerce; and becomes powerful in proportion to the riches of its private members." This maxim which I believe, will be found, upon a strict scrutiny to admit of many exceptions, has been established without reserve, or limitation: upon the foundation of which have been fabricated almost

almost all government measures for some wars past. Our commerce, ever since the administration of Sir Robert Walpole, has been gradually increasing to the amazing emolument of private individuals, whilst the publick credit has been gradually \* sinking thro' the enormous expences attending the support of the same. The riches of private men have been introductive of luxury, that grand promoter of dissolute manners, but not contributory to lessen one shilling of the publick debt, but rather destructive of all † love and regard for the publick.

After

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\* According to an accurate calculation made by the author of the General View of England, it appears, that from the year 1751, the balance of exchange has been one year with another at least three hundred thousand pounds against England : and that it has been entirely by borrowing, that the interest of the sums, owed by her abroad, has been paid.

† Woeful experience can testify how much the late raging thirst after riches has alienated the affections

After all, this boasted superiority resulting from commerce, has been affirmed by an ingenious \* writer to be altogether imaginary: " That (to make use of his own words) it is no more than a vain phantom begot, and usher'd into the world by erroneous ideas on the essence of commerce. And that when it was computed how much the territorial income of the English might perhaps amount to, the whole produce of their trade would be found to be swallowed up in it."

How

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affections of private men from the publick, in the most scandalous general monopolies, so frequent of late years, to the great prejudice of the publick; the receivers of publick money, are countenanced by the times to become down right plunderers, and the debt of the nation is now become a sure source of profit to private individuals. These are the happy effects resulting from a too general attention to commerce; our minds are contracted and debased to the last degree, our liberality is confined to self, on which we lavish thousands, whilst we grudge to supply the smallest wants of the publick,

\* Author of a General View of England,



How well he has supported this hypothesis, your lordship I must beg leave to refer to the work itself for the gratification of your curiosity, if excited; I neither adopt altogether that author's sentiments, nor think myself responsible for any illustration of the same; the examination of which, would require more time than is consistent with my present design. It is however an enquiry worthy the attention of every well-wisher to his country; and tho' partial, and void of reason as that work may in many parts be found, it conveys notwithstanding hints, which, by a judicious application, might be made conducive to the good of this kingdom. It suffices at present for me to shew the ill effects resulting from a too blind regard for this doctrine, which has infatuated us to grasp at a greater extent of dominion, than we are able to maintain.

Agreeable

Agreeable to this favourite maxim have those colonies ever been most partially considered ; their territory, commerce, and power extended, and established, by a total expulsion of all foreign enemies, who were undoubtedly the fittest instrument government could have been furnished with, for the preservation of that necessary reliance on their mother country. The unexpected removal of this bar to their independency, to which the successes of this war have most effectually contributed, has flattered them in this hasty and premature opposition to the jurisdiction of a British parliament: which may serve to open the eyes of our rulers, with respect to their future designs ; for a belief that America will remain in subjection to Great Britain any longer than rendered incapable of assuming an independency, is too absurd to be admitted. Instead thereof of promoting the vast increase of our colonies, by a too general indulgence to their trade

trade and manufactories, to the \* rivalry of this country, policy pointed out an evident necessity for restraining that exorbitancy of power; and which should have been the invariable object, for years past, of ministerial consideration:

This doctrine, I am well aware, will rouse the clamours of the trading part of this nation against me, from that natural connection, which, throughout life subsists, betwixt interest and opinion; as whatever is found incompatible with the *former*, is but too apt to meet with the disapprobation of the *latter*. Nor will there be wanting others to espouse a cause, which has been so favorably entertained by this age.

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Commerce

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\* In the support of this fact, I need only instance that unaccountable inattention of administration to the prodigious increase of ship-building, of late years, in America, to the manifest prejudice of that most valuable branch of business amongst ourselves, the very bulwark of this nation.

Commerce is a subject too popular to be easily discountenanced in this kingdom ; nor indeed would I be understood to insinuate any denial of its utility, under wise regulations, and proper restrictions. But on the other hand I cannot admit it as the sole support of government, and basis of its grandeur and power ; nor is history productive of any authorities, for the establishment of such a maxim ; on the contrary, upon an impartial review of history we shall be furnish'd with more examples of its destructive, than salutary effects upon \* antient governments. But to return to my

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\* The most illustrious period of the Roman greatness, if we credit history, was that, during the several punic wars, e'er the extent of conquests had furnish'd the Romans with the means of enriching themselves with the spoils of the subjected provinces in that *Æra*, the *private* was intimately connected with the *publick* good ; because there then subsisted no temptations to avarice, which the lucrative profits of their rich provinces afterwards introduced, by which, individuals were enrich'd to that degree, as to become obnoxious to the common



my subject. Our ancestors, from a thorough conviction of the depravity of human nature, and experience of mans variable disposition, wisely foresaw the expediency of fettering obedience with necessity, without which government could never have been established; they judiciously considered *Fear*, and not any *moral* obligation, as the predominant and actuating principle of every submission to authority: and, in consequence of this necessary policy, ever exacted a rigid respect for the idea of magistracy, and punish'd in exemplary manner all dis-

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regard

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common wealth—as many, in M. Anthony's time were put into proscription on account of their exorbitant wealth; notwithstanding, the state itself, through the luxury of its members, became poorer and weaker. And at last, from an incapacity to maintain in subjection its vast extent of territorial dominion, was totally annihilated. The reputation of agriculture, was, notwithstanding the several convulsions by which that state became distracted, still buoyant to the last; and tho' more honour'd and distinguish'd in the Adolescence of the Republick, was yet creditable, even in the dissipating reigns of the emperors.

regard for its authority——But we, in this age of abandoned licentiousness, have released obedience from the shackles of necessity, and suffer her to roam at large at the arbitrary will of discretion——Such at least will our conduct appear with respect to our colonists ; who have in this recent instance of their ingratitude but too fatally evinced the truth of these observations : As their opposition to the Stamp Duty carries with it the most manifest symptoms of contempt for their Mother Country, the natural tho' sad effects of a blind indulgence. For without waiting the result of representation to this parliament for a redress of their grievances (even allowing the Stamp-Duty to be one) they have boldly, and in defiance to this government, assumed to themselves the powers both of judge and executioner. Can it then be imagined that America will think herself bound by moral obligation to pay any future obedience to Great-Britain disadvantageous to herself? No. Fear and

and her Interest have hitherto been the motives of her submission. The first we have most indiscretely removed, by giving them a sole and indisputable possession of territory, capable of contending sovereignty with the world; the latter they will take care to remove whenever a probability arises of its suffering by us, and of its deriving greater \* emoluments from an intercourse with foreign powers, who by granting more indulgences to the same, than may be found

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\* Experience has already given testimony to this truth, as it can be made appear beyond refutation, that notwithstanding several acts of parliament have been made for controuling the commerce of the colonists, and confining it within such bounds as the legislature thought most conducive to the interests of government, a settled course of traffick has been carried on for several years last past by our subjects in America to French ports, to which their vessels have sailed *directly*, laden with pitch, train oil, timber trees, and plank for ship-building, logwood, furs, naval stores, and sundry other commodities, and have returned back again without ever touching in Great Britain, with goods of the growth and manufacture of France and other foreign nations.

found compatible with the interest of this country, will not fail to detach them from every reliance on, or connection with us whatever.

By yielding up therefore to our colonies a sole and exclusive right of taxing themselves, government, I am bold to assert, sacrifices the only sovereignty essential towards the continuance of their dependency, as it cannot but be allowed by all impartial, and dispassionate men, that by ceding to them this grand privilege, government is totally incapacitated from taxing them at all, and surely, a very little acquaintance with human nature is necessary, to evince the absurdity of supposing, that America will pay an implicit obedience to Great Britain upon principles of *natural duty only*, when the latter has virtually lost the power of controuling the former. What security then will this country have for the Americans future obedience? for to their generosity, and not obligation, must the  
requisitions



requisitions of government in *futurum* be addressed, and probable is the suspicion, that they will hereafter claim, as an appendage to this great immunity, a right of examining the necessities of administration, e'er they will be brought to a consent of granting any relief to the same.

In short if the power of contributing towards the support of this government is rendered thus optional, and discretionary with the colonists, it requires but little penetration to foresee a separation of interests betwixt Great-Britain and America ; a Consequence of the most fatal tendency to the dissolution of this great empire.

Such has but too apparently been the ill-judged policy of this kingdom, with respect to her colonies in America, which has at length brought this nation into a most singular, and critical situation ;—— a situation so truly alarming, as demands  
the

the wisest and fullest deliberations of parliament, as well as the most vigorous exertion of the powers of government to save the last remains of British Power in North America.

I have the Honor to be

Your Lordship's

Most obedient humble Servant.

F I N I S.



